



Notice of Preparation
For a Supplemental Environmental Impact
Report / Environmental Impact Statement for the
Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project
Proposed by Southern California Edison
SCH No. 2007081156



OCT - 2 2012

A. Introduction

On June 29, 2007, Southern California Edison (SCE) submitted to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) application A.07-06-031 for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) for the construction and operation of the Tehachapi Renewable Transmission Project (TRTP or Project). The CPUC granted a CPCN on December 24, 2009 (Decision 09-12-044). The Forest Service issued a Record of Decision (ROD) approving the Special Use authorization for the Project on October 4, 2010.

Since that time, SCE has completed final engineering on portions of the Approved Project, started construction, and is currently undergoing consultation with the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) regarding the new transmission structures to be installed as part of the Approved Project, as required by Mitigation Measure L-2b (Aircraft flight path and safety provisions and consultations). While Mitigation Measure L-2b required consultation with the FAA, the scope of the recommendations was not known prior to completion of the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and was not fully analyzed. Therefore, on October 17, 2011, SCE filed a Petition for Modification of Decision 09-12-044 to address implementation of the FAA recommendations, including installation of marker balls on certain transmission line spans, installation of aviation lights on certain transmission structures, and engineering refinements to structures within Segment 8 between Chino Substation and Mira Loma Substation. (Note: The CPUC has issued a construction stay for Segment 8A within the City of Chino Hills [Decision 11-11-020, as modified by Decision 12-03-050], which, per the July 12, 2012 ruling of the Assigned Commissioner, will continue until the CPUC makes a final determination on undergrounding options; Segment 8A undergrounding options are not the subject of this Notice of Preparation.) The CPUC and Forest Service have determined that preparation of a Supplemental EIR/EIS (SEIR/SEIS) is needed to address the Project changes associated with the FAA's recommendations.

This Notice of Preparation (NOP) is being sent to interested agencies and members of the public. The purpose of the NOP is to inform recipients that the CPUC is beginning preparation of a SEIR/SEIS and to solicit information that will be helpful in the environmental review process.

This notice includes a description of the modifications that SCE proposes to construct in response to FAA's recommendations, a summary of potential impacts, and information on how to provide input on the issues to be examined in the SEIR/SEIS.

B. Proposed Modifications to the Approved Project

The Project, as approved by the CPUC and Forest Service prior to the construction stay in Segment 8A, includes the installation of new and upgraded transmission infrastructure along approximately 173 miles of new and existing right-of-way (ROW) in southern Kern County, portions of Los Angeles County, including the Angeles National Forest, and the southwestern portion of San Bernardino County, California, as shown in Figure 1. For descriptive purposes, the Project is separated into eight distinct segments, referred to as Segments 4 through 11. Segments 4 through 8, as well as Segments 10 and 11 of

the Project are transmission facilities, while Segment 9 addresses the addition and upgrade of substation facilities.

Upon completion of final engineering for various portions of the Approved Project, SCE identified the structures and catenaries (wire spans) that met the FAA reporting thresholds and submitted Form 7460-1 for each, as required by Mitigation Measure L-2b (Aircraft flight path and safety provisions and consultations). In response, the FAA issued determinations recommending the installation of marker balls on certain transmission line spans and aviation lights on certain transmission structures. While not all determinations from the FAA have been completed, SCE has estimated based on the initial FAA determinations (as of June 12, 2012) and based on transmission structure and span characteristics, that approximately 276 transmission line spans would require the installation of marker balls and approximately 90 transmission structures require aviation lights. These elements would be installed within Segments 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, and 11. (Segment 8A within the City of Chino Hills is stayed.) In addition, based on FAA concerns that certain structures near the Chino Airport would interfere with the instrument approach procedure, SCE proposes engineering refinements to lower certain structures in Segment 8 between Chino Substation and Mira Loma Substation.

C. Potential Environmental Effects

The CPUC and Forest Service intend to prepare a SEIR/SEIS to evaluate potential environmental effects of the proposed modifications to the TRTP, and to propose mitigation measures to reduce any new significant effects identified. The supplement to the Final EIR (October 2009) and Final EIS (September 2010) will contain only the information necessary to document all Project impacts for the proposed modifications (CEQA Guidelines 15163(b)). The CPUC and Forest Service find that for many issues and resources additional impacts are not likely to occur beyond those analyzed in the Final EIR and Final EIS.

For the environmental issues/resources listed below, the proposed modifications would not require additional analysis:

- Agricultural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Environmental Contamination and Hazards
- Geology, Soils, and Paleontology
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use
- Public Services and Utilities
- Socioeconomics
- Traffic and Transportation
- Wilderness and Recreation
- Wildfire Prevention and Suppression
- Electrical Interference and Hazards

The environmental review in the SEIR/SEIS will focus on the issues/resources listed below, addressing impacts that could occur due to implementation of the FAA's recommendations which were not covered in the Final EIR or Final EIS.

- **Air Quality and Greenhouse Gases (GHG):** The proposed modifications include both ground-based and helicopter construction activities, which would result in additional emissions. An updated analysis will be presented consistent with current CEQA/NEPA requirements and current emissions inventory data.
- **Biological Resources:** The proposed modifications would result in additional disturbance areas and helicopter use, as well as the installation of aviation lights, which would have the potential to result in additional biological resources impacts. Biological studies will be reviewed to evaluate the potential effects of visible lighting on birds as well as terrestrial and aquatic wildlife.

- **Noise:** The additional construction activities proposed, especially helicopter use, would have the potential to result in greater noise levels, as well as potentially effect new sensitive receptors, such as residents living in homes built and occupied since the Final EIR and Final EIS were completed (2009-2010).
- **Visual Resources:** Installation of lights and marker balls, as well as the tower changes in Segment 8, Phase 3, would have the potential to result in new Visual Resources impacts. Visual simulations will be prepared to address the proposed modifications and the visual impacts analyzed.

Mitigation Measures. The Final EIR and Final EIS for the TRTP presented numerous proposed measures that were designed to reduce or eliminate potential impacts of the Project. These measures were adopted by the CPUC in its approval of the Project and by the Forest Service in its ROD. The effectiveness of these measures to reduce impacts to specific resources affected by the proposed modifications will be evaluated in the SEIR/SEIS, and additional mitigation measures may be developed to further reduce impacts, if required. When the CPUC and Forest Service consider the Project, as modified by the FAA's recommendations, they will also consider adoption of the mitigation measures identified in the SEIR/SEIS as conditions of Project approval and adoption of a mitigation monitoring plan.

D. Comments

At this time, the CPUC is soliciting information regarding the scope and content that should be included in the SEIR/SEIS, as well as any suggestions for alternatives to the proposed modifications. **Please submit comments by October 25, 2012.** You may submit comments by U.S. mail or by electronic mail.

By Mail: Please use first-class U.S. mail and be sure to include your name and a return address. Please send written comments on the scope and content of the SEIR/SEIS to:

John Boccio, Project Manager
California Public Utilities Commission
c/o Aspen Environmental Group
5020 Chesebro Road, Suite 200
Agoura Hills, CA 91301

By Electronic Mail: E-mail communications are also accepted; however, please remember to include your name and return mailing address in the e-mail message.

E-mail: trtpsuppeir-eis@aspeneg.com.

E. Project Information

Information about the TRTP and the environmental review process will be posted on the internet at: ftp://ftp.cpuc.ca.gov/gopher-data/envIRON/tehachapi_renewables/TRTP.htm. This site will be used to post all public documents during the supplemental environmental review process. In addition, a copy of the Final EIR and Final EIS for TRTP may be found at this site.

FIGURE 1. Map of Approved TRTP Project Route

